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PALESTINE PERSPECTIVES

Palestine Research and Educational Center

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NOVEMBER 29

For the first time in recorded history, the world community committed itself in the twentieth century to the ideal of universalizing self-government and economic well-being. Self-determination and development became primary objectives of contemporary human civilization.

The transformation of Palestine into Israel, in 1948 and in subsequent years, deprived the Palestinian people of the opportunity to share this human dream. They have been denied self-government, and their lives have been disrupted and harassed.

Granted, the vision of universalizing self-government and development has been only partially and imperfectly achieved. Hundreds of millions of people around the world continue to suffer from hunger, disease and ignorance. And in many countries decolonization has not brought liberty and justice to their peoples. The struggle has not yet been consummated everywhere. But nowhere in the world, except in Palestine, has the deprivation been so deliberate, conscious and determined.

In other places the problem has been a failure of the dream, a failure to benefit from an opportunity which has been granted. In Palestine, it has been a failure to grant the opportunity and to share the dream. And that is the rationale and the nobility of the Palestinian struggle.

A disfigured international community, representing only the European nations, a small and unrepresentative seg-

ment of mankind, decreed the destruction of Palestine in 1947. By so doing, it victimized the Palestinian people, enflamed the Middle East and jeopardized the peace of the world. A quarter of a century and several Arab-Israeli wars later, a reformed world community more truly representative of the opinion of mankind recognized the error and resolved that peace and justice required the reconstitution of Palestine. November 29, the anniversary of the destruction of Palestine, was declared by the United Nations a day of international solidarity with the Palestinian people.

It is well to remember on this occasion that which is vital but often forgotten. The struggle in Palestine is not about the location of boundaries, the confiscation of land, the dissolution of municipalities or political imprisonment, although it concerns all of this and much more. It is fundamentally about the inadmissibility of singling out the Palestinian people for denial of access to the contemporary dream.

All efforts and initiatives made in the name of peace in the Middle East which fail to take this fact as their underlying premise are doomed to fail and deserve to fail. They are doomed to fail because they do not address the issue, and they deserve to fail because they make a mockery of a universally cherished human vision.

It remains to be said that the nearly universal recognition by the international community of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, enshrined in countless resolutions passed by the U.N. General Assembly during the past decade, does not in itself restore to them their usurped national rights. International legitimacy and the will of the international community are not self-executing. Israel, supported without apparent limits by the U.S. government, has managed to frustrate all efforts to restore Palestinian national rights. And the weakness of the Arab states produced an imbalance of power in the Middle East, to Israel's favor, which encouraged Israel to escalate—instead of moderate—its regional ambitions, and accustomed it to rely on military means to pursue these ambitions.

The international community can, of course, go beyond verbal support of Palestinian rights. The U.N. Charter authorizes the Security Council to use sanctions to secure compliance with U.N. resolutions. But as long as the United States continues to use its veto freely to protect Israel against sanctions, and as long as it continues to subsidize Israel's imperial fantasies and ambitions, Israel will continue to trample on Palestinian rights and to ignore the international community. Until the Arabs do what needs to be done to rectify the regional imbalance of power, the world will continue to celebrate November 29 as a Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people but in the midst of war in the Middle East. □

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INTERVIEW

with Hassan Abdul Rahman

Director, Palestine Information Office, Washington



Q. The world community has been observing November 29 as an international day of solidarity with the Palestinian people since the United Nations passed a resolution to that effect several years ago. This is the first time this occasion is observed when Palestinian solidarity itself appears to be endangered. How would this problem affect international support for the Palestinian people?

A. International support for the Palestinian people and their national rights came in recognition of the legitimacy of the Palestinian struggle under PLO leadership. International support for the Palestinians, from which only two states deviated, the U.S. and Israel, was not a subjective reaction but a logical response to the achievements of the Palestinian people and their national liberation movement.

This international solidarity is affected by international and regional developments, the most important of which are the following:

1. The world is going through one of the hottest stages of the cold war. International polarization is taking place. This is bound to affect the international consensus on many issues.

2. The Arab world is in a state of flux, partly due to the international polarization. This gives the impression of an eroding Arab consensus on regional issues. And since the Arab consensus on Palestine was instrumental in generating an international consensus (for example, Arab recognition of the PLO in the Rabat Summit of 1974 facilitated UN recognition), the apparent lack of Arab consensus now can affect international support for the Palestinians.

3. The period following the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in the summer of 1982 was a period of regrouping and reorganization for the PLO. In fact, it was not only the Palestinians who were affected by the war. Israel is also undergoing a political, economic, and social crisis.

As a result of all of these factors, the international consensus in support of the Palestinian people and their struggle was bound to be affected. I do not believe that there is less commitment to Palestinian national rights, but international support for them seems to be less active and concrete. There are indications, however, that the international community is re-emerging from this phase and showing more active support, as in the recent International Conference on the Question of Palestine (Geneva) and the current session of the UN General Assembly.

Regarding the question of Palestinian solidarity, it is not correct to say that it is endangered. Although what has been happening inside the Palestinian national movement does have a Palestinian dimension, the principal conflict is between the Palestinians on one hand and certain Arab regimes on the other. The Palestinian people, with insignificant individual exceptions, remain steadfast in their support and loyalty to the institutions and leadership of the PLO, as was demonstrated by public opinion polls in the occupied territories.

Q. Some U.S. officials are suggesting to the Arab states to go back on their decision in the Rabat Summit Conference of 1974, in which they recognized the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Do you see something of this sort happening in future Arab summit conferences?

A. This is an absurd position, a sheer fantasy. It reflects a lack of understanding of the Arab world and the dynamics of the Palestinian national struggle. It betrays ignorance of the level of commitment of the Arab peoples to the rights of the Palestinians.

Palestine is the only pan-Arab issue. It is the focus of the Arab conscience and at the center of the Arab peoples national and individual awareness. Because the PLO is the embodiment of Palestinian peoplehood and the symbol of Palestinian struggle for national rights, the Arabs may sometimes disagree with individual Palestinian leaders or with a specific PLO policy, but never with the concept of the PLO and what it stands for. When President Sadat agreed to compromise these basics in the Camp David Accord, he earned immediate Arab (including Egyptian) condemnation.

Arab recognition of the PLO was never an act of charity. It came as the inevitable result of the sacrifices of the Palestinian people and the justness of the cause for which they struggle under the banner of the PLO. The PLO derives its legitimacy from the support of the Palestinian people and the justness of their cause. So, in the next Arab summit, the PLO will be seated as a full member of the League of Arab States, and Yasser Arafat will occupy the Palestinian chair.

Q. Some people are saying that Israeli annexation of the West Bank and Gaza has become irreversible, and thus their Palestinian inhabitants should begin to struggle for civil rights instead of national rights. Would you like to comment on this view?

A. The Palestinian people did not struggle and sacrifice for 100 years to be a minority in someone else's country. They struggled and continue to struggle for self-determination and national independence, for the preservation of their national identity, both demographic and geographic. In other words, they struggle for an independent Palestinian state on Palestinian national soil. It is unthinkable that the Palestinian people will ever accept to be a minority where they will be aliens in their own homeland.

Besides, it is impossible for any community to have its civil and human rights respected in a state predicated on racism and racial discrimination. By definition, a Jewish state is discriminatory in ideology and policy against those who are not members of the official faith. If Israel accepts equality between Jews and non-Jews, it will not be a Zionist state. People who advise the Palestinians to seek civil rights in Israel do not understand Israeli society and the principles on which it stands.

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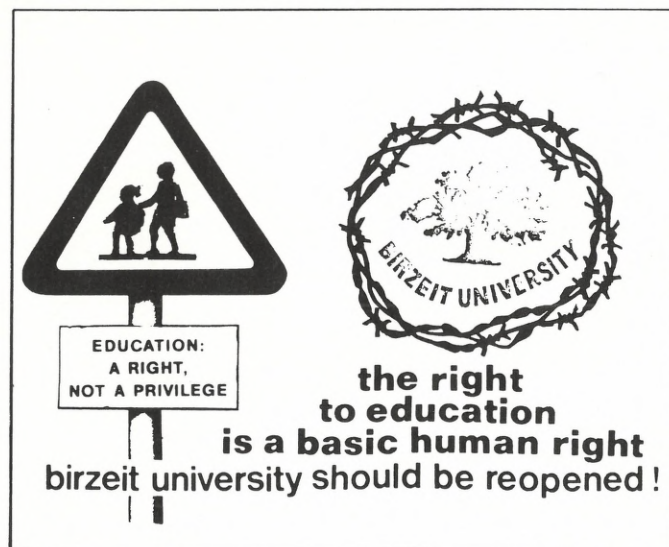
THE PEN AND THE SWORD: Universities Under Occupation

by Hanna Assadi

The one issue which ran like a strand of barbed wire through the life of all four universities this year was the anti-PLO work permit application, introduced by the military just before the start of term. Al-Najah University, Nablus, the largest university on the West Bank, lost 28 of its staff; Bir Zeit, the oldest, saw five of its teachers leave; Bethlehem, the university set up by the Catholic Church, had one foreign staff member expelled and another 11 barred from the campus; Hebron, the youngest university, did not lose any teachers although as foreign passport holders, their outside staff had a tense year.

The issue started as a small cloud on the horizon, August 28, 1982, when the announcement appeared in the local press of an Israeli edict stating that all non-West Bank students must get permits to enter their colleges. The order, one section of Military Order 854, which would give Israel full control over the independent universities in the occupied territories, was immediately rejected. In the next week a second order applying to all teachers was issued, but on September 8 only teachers from Gaza, the Galilee, the Triangle and Jerusalem had to have permits.

It was this order, with its adjoining demand that teachers



agree not to indulge "in any act (or offer) any assistance to the organization called the PLO or any terrorist organization," that was to be the basis of a year-long struggle. Al-Najah was chosen for attention first: three teachers were summarily deported September 12 and 13; a week later eight more had gone.

By October the total had risen to 14, including Vice President Abd al-Rahman Shahin and President Munther Salah. Eventually 25 teachers were deported, denied entry to the occupied territories or barred from the campus.

By November 15, BZU had lost five teachers; they were the last to go.

Students have always been targets for arrest and detention by occupation troops. Last academic year the whole of the BZU student council was put under town arrest

INTERVIEW (continued from page 2)

There are more than 600,000 Palestinians already in Israel. They are considered "citizens." They are systematically discriminated against; their land has been confiscated; they have no newspapers, and are denied the right to political associations. They have no universities.

Finally, I would like to add that if Israel annexes the West Bank and Gaza, it will eliminate all possibilities of political settlement, and war will be the only option left. Political compromise will become irrelevant, and the struggle will intensify because it will be the only choice left.

Q. The United States is posing as a peace-maker in the Middle East. Do you see an American effort to modify Israeli behavior?

A. Aside from tactical and cosmetic differences, historically American policy on the Palestine question and the Arab-Israeli conflict has coincided with the Israeli position on all essential issues. Both the U.S. and Israel reject Palestinian independence and the Palestinian people's right to speak through their own national leadership, the PLO.

Secondly, the United States is the subsidizer of the state of Israel. I do not mean that it only supports it, but it actually underwrites Israel and its policies. It is committed to the maintenance of Israeli military superiority in the region. Furthermore, this support is not conditional on Israeli behavior. It is a blank check.

Also, the United States does not see the Middle East as the homeland of the Arab people, but as a source of raw materials and the location of military bases. It sees it as a strategic position in the confrontation with the Soviet Union. In a way, this view dehumanizes the Arabs. It reduces them to mere abstractions. They become either tools or obstacles, not human societies with their own concerns and aspirations. The only time the Middle East is spoken of in human terms, it is done in reference to Israel, which is said to share civilized Western values.

Thus, when the U.S. speaks of its policy objectives in the Middle East, the Arabs disappear. Only Israel's "security" is visible, and the expulsion of the Soviet influence, as President Reagan put it in his recent speech on the role of the marines in Lebanon. There is no place, in this thinking, for the Arab people who are the people of the region.

Now the U.S. wants to enlarge Israel's military role in the Middle East, to make it an instrument of Reagan's militaristic foreign policy, despite the fact that the present difficulties of U.S. Middle East policy are the direct result of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Israel, and its war in Lebanon, are being advertised as strategic assets for the United States. The American people should know that Israel's behavior is likely to be disastrous to American interests and most damaging to its integrity, as the coming years will show. □

through to February of this year. A new development is the harassment of groups of students undertaking community work projects in villages. In late October and early November, 28 students picking olives in Assira al-Shamaliya, near Nablus, were detained, with one incarcerated in Nablus jail. In Ya'abad, near Jenin, 20 working students were arrested and taken to the local military governorate for interrogation. In Salfit five were held and at Anabta nine students, one professor and a US student were detained by soldiers.

In the spring a busload of students was picked up on their way back from a work camp in Um al-Fahm, and on Land Day, March 30, a tree-planting ceremony on the new campus was conducted amidst roadblocks with armed soldiers surrounding the campus. Several more arrests were made during voluntary work projects by BZU students in the Gaza Strip.

On November 28 the entire Bethlehem student council was detained. Two months later they were taken again after a raid on the university when soldiers stripped the student council offices and notice boards.

University sources estimate that several hundred students were detained during the last year. According to a BZU official, two-thirds of their student detainees were held on flimsy charges of possession of illegal literature or posters.

The tally of 'lesser' harassments are legion. Several dozen students had frustrating repeat visits to local military headquarters, trying to retrieve confiscated ID cards. Lecturers Riyadh Mifleh and Hassan Abu Libdeh of the BZU biology and mathematics departments both served terms of town arrest. Sami Kilani of the al-Najah physics department was also put under town arrest. Adnan Idris, a teacher of mathematics in Najah, was arrested in April for the 11th time in three years. He has never been charged.

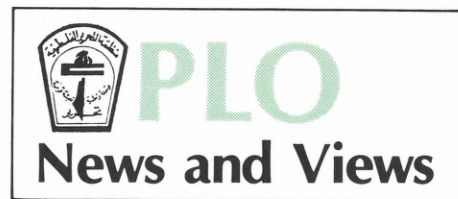
Many students from all schools were refused travel documents and some received anonymous threatening telephone calls warning them to stop attending classes.

Israeli authorities moved against Bethlehem University, March 9, with a four-week-long closure severely disrupting classes to pay students back for demonstrating against the presence of former U.S. President Jimmy Carter in the town. Hebron University suffered worse. It was shut two days later for two months. Doors were only reopened after protracted attempts by Israel to impose an escalating scale of sanctions on the administration.

Al-Najah received top prize for most extended closure, however. After an anti-occupation anniversary demonstration on campus at the start of June, the military ordered the Nablus school closed until September 20. Officials say this has already delayed graduation and will cause huge problems at the beginning of the next semester.

The general terror of academic life is of course unchanged. Censorship and book-banning lists keep library shelves bare and hinder research. Unemployment facing graduates is causing growing concern. But as blackboards are dusted off for the next year, who will be allowed to teach and who will get to study is still questioned and questionable. □

This article is reprinted, in a slightly abbreviated form, from al-Fajr (Jerusalem) of 30 September 1983, where it appeared under the title: "1982-83: An Unsettled Academic Year."



ATTACK ON PLO WIDELY CONDEMNED

The outbreak of fighting in the Tripoli area early in November brought widespread condemnation of the attack on Palestinian refugee camps and PLO positions in the north of Lebanon. In a statement to Wafa, the Palestine News Agency, Bassam Abu Sharif, member of the Political Committee of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, said the fighting serves only the Zionist enemy. He called on all Palestinians to uphold the legal institutions of the PLO which, he said, are the only bodies authorized to make decisions in the name of the Palestinian revolution.

In Tunis, the Central Committee of Fateh decided to expel the leaders of the dissidents from the movement, on the grounds that they caused great damage to Palestinian struggle.

Large demonstrations against the attack on PLO forces took place in the Yarmouk refugee camp in Damascus, where it was reported that 8 people were killed and 38 wounded. Also in Damascus, Palestinian popular organizations staged a sit-in strike in protest against the attacks. Participating groups included the General Union of Palestinian Women, the General Union of Palestinian Students, the Union of Palestinian Writers and Journalists, the Engineers Association, and the Association of Doctors and Pharmacists.

Demonstrations took place throughout the occupied West Bank, its towns and refugee camps. And the residents of al-Wahdat refugee camp in Amman, Jordan, cabled a message of support to Chairman Yasser Arafat.

The fighting in the Tripoli area continues, and heavy casualties are reported, especially among the civilian residents of the Palestinian refugee camps there. The Palestine Red Crescent Society stated that it has become beyond its capacity to handle the increasing need for medical treatment and issued an appeal for medical personnel, blood plasma and medications.

Support for the constitutional leadership and institutions of the PLO and condemnation of external attempts to dominate it were also expressed by Palestinian communities abroad.

On November 7, the Palestinians in West Germany staged a sit-in and hunger strike at the offices of the Arab League in Bonn, and sent a message of support to Mr. Arafat. On the same day, the Palestinian community in Chicago issued a statement in support of the PLO under the chairmanship of Yasser Arafat and condemned the attack on PLO forces in north Lebanon. The Association of Arab American University Graduates called for a halt to the attack. In a cable sent to the Secretary-General of the Arab League, among others, the AAUG called on the League to work for a cease-fire.

In Kuwait, thousands of Palestinian and other Arab

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News and Views

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students attended a rally. The participants sent a message of support to Chairman Arafat. And from Geneva, a message was sent to Mr. Arafat from the Swiss-Palestinian Association and the Friends of Palestine in Switzerland, expressing support for the independence of the PLO as the legitimate representatives of the Palestinian people.

On the official Arab level, several Arab states condemned the attack on PLO forces in north Lebanon, and the Kuwaiti parliament voted to discontinue economic aid to Syria, which amounts to \$265 million a year. □

PLO PARTICIPATES IN ARAB-EUROPEAN DIALOGUE

The Palestine National Council (PNC) participated in a meeting of Arab and European parliamentarians which convened in late October in Baghdad, Iraq. Thirteen Arab and twelve European parliamentary delegations participated in this Arab-European dialogue. The European participants called on their governments to take a firm stand in support of the national rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination, and to recognize the PLO.

The PNC is the highest policy-making body in the PLO, and is equivalent to a parliament. Palestinians from all walks of life, regions, and political affiliations are represented in the PNC.

MAYORS QAWASMEH AND MILHEM SPEAK ON PLO MUTINY

The mayor of the city of Hebron, Fahed Qawasmeh, and the mayor of Halhoul, Muhammad Milhem, spoke to the Palestinian community in Washington during their recent visit to the United States on the mutiny in Fateh against Mr. Yasser Arafat's leadership. The mayors condemned the mutiny as an attempted *coup d'etat*, and described it as a Syrian effort to subordinate the PLO and the Palestinian national movement.

The mayors said that no Palestinian denies or objects to the need to reform the PLO and to strengthen it as a national liberation movement. However, they added, any attempt to downgrade the PLO to the status of a client for any non-Palestinian party is dangerous and objectionable to the Palestinian people, especially when such an attempt is made through the agency of a military mutiny against the legitimate political leadership and outside the framework of constitutional processes.

Mayors Qawasmeh and Milhem were deported from the West Bank by the Israeli occupation authorities in 1980. Since then, most of the elected mayors of West Bank towns and cities have been dismissed from their positions and replaced by Israeli "acting mayors" appointed by military governors. Assassination attempts against three mayors resulted in inflicting permanent handicaps on the mayors of Nablus and Ramallah.

AUSTRALIAN FOREIGN MINISTER MEETS PLO REPRESENTATIVE

Australian Foreign Minister Bill Heyden met with the PLO representative in Canberra on October 26. Wafa, the Palestine News Agency, which reported the meeting, said the Australian and Palestinian officials discussed during the half hour meeting the situation in the Middle East. The PLO representative expressed his appreciation of the Australian government's recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and independence, and its opposition to Israeli settlement policy in the West Bank and Gaza. He also commended Australia for its decision to authorize its ambassadors to meet with PLO representatives, and conveyed to the foreign minister greetings from PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and PLO Political Department head Farouk Kaddoumi.

This is the first time a meeting is held between a PLO representative and an Australian foreign minister.

REFUGEE CAMPS SUPPORT PLO INDEPENDENCE

Representatives of Palestinian camps in the Nablus area expressed their support for the leadership and institutions of the PLO, and their right to maintain their independence free from outside interference. This message was conveyed to PLO chairman Yasser Arafat by representatives of Balata, Asker, and other refugee camps around Nablus in the occupied West Bank.

PLO COMMENTS ON KHADRA'S DEFECTION

The PLO issued a statement in Tripoli, Lebanon, on October 20, on the defection of Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) commander, Colonel Tariq al-Khadra, and his announcement from Damascus that he joined the Fateh dissidents. The PLO statement described Khadra as the "self-imposed" commander of the PLA, and said that he was appointed as the commander of the Hittin Forces by the Syrian authorities and without the approval of the Command of the Palestinian Revolution. The PLO said Khadra's defection reveals the extent of Syrian involvement in Palestinian affairs.

The Palestine News Agency, Wafa, reported from Tunis that two senior PLA officers, Lt. Cols. Abdelfattah al-Ji'aidi and Mohammed Hussein, who are the commander and deputy commander of Ain al-Hilweh Forces, said in a press conference that Khadra's defection is a "Syrian-imposed stance aimed at deepening internal Palestinian disputes and the split within the PLO." They expressed doubts that he consulted any of his officers before making a decision.

In another report, Wafa quoted a statement by a number of high-ranking Palestinian commanders in which they condemned Khadra's defection and described it as a Syrian attempt to liquidate the PLO. The officers who signed this statement include the PLA's deputy chief of staff, the commander of Qadisiyah Forces, the deputy commander of Shakif Forces, the commander of the Popular Resistance Forces, the commander of the Sixth Artillery Battalion, and others.

ANSAR: THE GREAT ESCAPE

The Ansar detention camp in occupied southern Lebanon, where thousands of Palestinian and Lebanese political prisoners are detained, is a large camp surrounded by rolls of barbed wire, followed by a wall of dirt four meters high, followed by more barbed wire, followed by a second wall of dirt as high as the first. The distance between the inner barbed wire and the outer wall is 50 meters. The camp is also surrounded by a large number of observation towers equipped with powerful searchlights. In the hills around the camp, tanks are dug in and the landscape is dotted with gun emplacements and machine gun nests.

The Ansar camp is divided into smaller inner camps, each of which is numbered and holds 30 to 40 detainees. Camps 8 and 20 resemble all the others, except that they were chosen by the detainees to be the scene of what the inmates called operation "Great Escape."

Three committees were formed: one to procure the proper tools, another to construct the means of escape, and the third, called the security committee, to observe enemy movements during the performance of the necessary work.

The inmates then began to dig. The implements included tent pegs concealed during a previous uprising in the camp in which the tents were burned down, stones transformed into sledge hammers, and a ruler stolen from the camp clinic. Three groups, consisting of ten prisoners each, took turns excavating the tunnels. The work went on 24 hours a day. In other camps, fake tunneling was undertaken to divert the attention of the guards. A lot of loud parties all over the camp helped cover up the noise made by the work crews.

As the tunnels lengthened, it became more and more difficult to see and breathe. Mirrors were used to deflect some light into the tunnels. Rubber hoses, attached to plastic containers, were used to pump air into them. The freshly dug dirt was sprinkled on the dirt floors of the tents, and vegetable gardens were grown by the prisoners in order to



Ansar =
Israeli guard + American rifle +
Palestinian and Lebanese prisoners

conceal the dirt dug from the tunnels.

Three days before the work was completed, Israeli guards uncovered the tunnel in camp 20. Tanks were driven all over the camp grounds to collapse any other tunnels which may exist. But the tunnel in camp 8 held.

After 50 days of work, the rush to freedom began. Before the Israeli guards knew what was happening, dozens of detainees had already melted away into the darkness which led to freedom.

MOTHER'S APPEAL

Mrs. Samiha Khalil, president of In'ash al-Usra (Family Relief) Society of al-Bireh, in the occupied West Bank, has appealed to mothers throughout the world to support her struggle to see her children who live outside Palestine. The Israeli occupation authorities refuse to allow her to travel to visit her children, and refuse to permit them to enter the West Bank to visit their mother. In her appeal, Mrs. Khalil said, "I call on all mothers in the world to help me in this purely maternal and humanistic issue."

anistic issue."

Mrs. Khalil heads one of the most successful voluntary social welfare agencies in the West Bank. The Society assists needy families, gives student scholarships, fights illiteracy among Palestinian women and teaches girls skills to help them support themselves and their families. Like all other Palestinian institutions in the occupied territories, In'ash al-Usra Society is frequently harassed by the Israeli occupation authorities, often by placing its administrators under detention, house arrest and by limiting their movement in general.

Life Under Occupation

TENSION IN THE WEST BANK

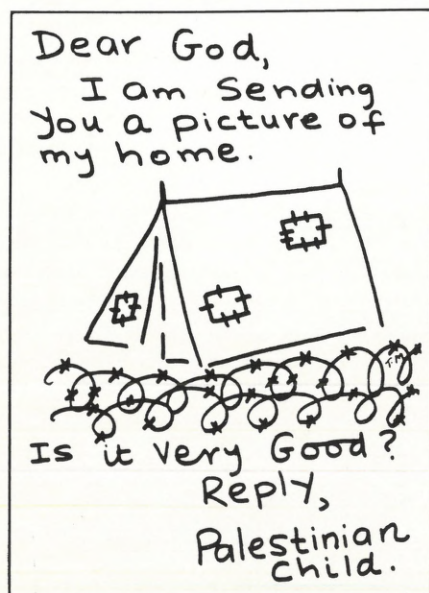
November 2, the anniversary of the Balfour Declaration, was a day of widespread demonstrations and clashes with the Israeli occupation forces in the occupied West Bank. The demonstrators raised Palestinian flags and posters of Yasser Arafat in defiance of Israeli repression.

The Israeli military "coordinator" of the occupied territories, General Benjamin Eliazar, ordered the closure of Bethlehem University for two months, and Israeli soldiers barred the way to Najah University in Nablus and prevented the students from reaching it. Two UNRWA schools, Qalandia and Arroub, were also ordered closed down. Curfews were imposed on several refugee camps in the Bethlehem area.

The day before the University of Bethlehem was closed down, Israeli troops surrounded the campus for seven hours and prevented the students from leaving. The students were protesting the arrest of 18 of their fellow students.

A general strike was observed in Jerusalem. In Nablus, demonstrators set free two pigeons carrying the Palestinian flag. Israeli soldiers shot the birds down.

Life Under Occupation



TORTURE IN PRISON

The Israeli lawyer, Felicia Langer, protested to the Israeli "Judicial Advisor" of the West Bank the use of torture against the Palestinian political prisoner Hatem Ahmad Nawara. Hatem, a resident of the town of Qalqilya, is currently detained in al-Fare'a military prison.

Langer's letter stated that Hatem was chained and mercilessly tortured for refusing the prison warden's order to "dive" into the prison's sewage hole. She added that torture is a daily routine in al-Fare'a prison. Copies of Langer's letter of protest were sent to the International Red Cross and to Amnesty International.

Felicia Langer is vice president of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights, and frequently defends Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli detention camps. She has recorded many of her experiences in her book, *With My Own Eyes*.

SETTLERS BURN JALAZOUN SHOPS

The Palestine News Agency, WAFA, reported that Israeli settlers set fire, on 20 October, to a number

of shops in the Jalazoun refugee camp north of Ramallah. The camp, which is located alongside the Ramallah-Nablus highway, has been the scene of frequent harassment by Israeli settlers and occupation forces. It has been repeatedly subjected to curfews, searches and other forms of pressure. It is populated by refugees from the war of 1948.

BIRZEIT UNIVERSITY VICE PRESIDENT DETAINED

The Israeli military authorities detained Dr. Gabi Baramki, vice president of Birzeit University, on November 9, following a student rally held in protest against the closure of Bethlehem University for two months. Student bodies in the universities of the occupied territories have a strong sense of solidarity with each other, and they naturally protest Israeli repression of other universities.

The occupation authorities routinely hold university administrators responsible for the political activities of their students, over which they actually have no control, as it is in the case of universities the world over. They often threaten university officials with the imposition of even more stringent military control if they fail to control student political expression. The administrators have always held that they are neither policemen nor "political commissars," and that the Israelis themselves are responsible for provoking student protest because of their exceedingly repressive policies toward the universities and the population as a whole.

Birzeit University itself has been frequently closed for varying periods of time. In fact, it holds the record for this type of punitive action by the military government. During the academic year 1981-1982, it was closed three times for a total of seven months.

Dr. Baramki, the vice president of BZU, is a Canadian-educated chemist. Since Dr. Hanna Nasser, the president of the university was expelled from the occupied West Bank by the Israeli military government, Dr. Baramki has also served as acting president.

SELF-DETERMINATION ISRAELI STYLE

An Israeli official, Zamir Shemesh, was appointed by the Israeli occupation authorities as acting mayor of Hebron, a Palestinian Arab city of 70,000 inhabitants. Why does Hebron have an Israeli mayor? Because in 1980 the Israelis deported Fahed Qawasmeh, the elected mayor, and later dismissed Mustafa Natshe, his deputy who became acting mayor.

Now it has become clear why Qawasmeh was deported and Natshe was dismissed. It goes beyond Israel's desire to dismantle Palestinian institutions. This fact became apparent late in September 1983 when the "acting Israeli mayor," on instructions from Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens, decided on behalf of the city of Hebron to withdraw objections to Jewish settlement inside the city.

The city of Hebron has been a major target of Jewish settlement in the occupied territories, a fact which has led on frequent occasions since 1967 to bloody clashes between the people of the city and the Israeli occupation army and Israeli settlers, and made Hebron a main victim of settler terrorism. The most recent atrocity committed by Israeli settlers in Hebron took place on July 26 of this year, when armed settlers attacked students and faculty members at the University of Hebron, killing three of them and wounding more than thirty others.

To protect the city and its inhabitants from the confiscation of property and acts of violence resulting from this invasion by Israeli settlers, the Hebron municipality petitioned the High Court of Justice in Jerusalem last year to order the occupation authorities to stop the demolition of Arab buildings to make room for Jewish settlers. Now, the "acting Israeli mayor" had decided to withdraw this petition, an act which is intended to force open Hebron's gates even wider to Israeli settlers.

Israel has long held that the PLO does not represent the Palestinian people. Apparently it believes that Moshe Arens and his appointees are more appropriate spokesmen for the Palestinians.

MILITARY ORDER 1015: TOMATO PERMIT

Israel which, as all misguided souls know, is famous for making deserts bloom, is intent on converting the West Bank into a desert—except for oases inhabited by Jewish settlers. This seems to be the purpose of a new edict, Military Order Number 1015, issued this year to give the Israeli military governor the power to tell Palestinian farmers how much or how little of what crops they are permitted to plant. Palestinian agricultural experts say this order is designed to make Palestinian farming less profitable and to increase the dependence of the population of the occupied territories on the Israeli economy.

The dangerous implications of order 1015 are many. Some of them are explained in the following excerpted letter to the editor of the *Jerusalem Post* (October 2-8, 1983) by Michael J. Berger, a resident of Jerusalem:

'ORWELLIAN' EDICT BY AREAS COMMANDER

To the Editor of *The Jerusalem Post*

Sir,—“By virtue of my powers as IDF commander in the (Judea and Samaria) region, believing it to be for the welfare of the population (sic!) and in order to protect the sources of water and the agricultural produce of the region for the benefit of the public, I hereby order as follows. . . No person shall plant a fruit tree unless he has previously obtained a permit in writing from the competent authority. . .”

This is not, as might be expected, a rather inept lampoon on what is going on in the West Bank. It is real. The facsimile of order 1015 of the commander of IDF in the territories was reproduced in a recent number of the weekly *Koteret Rashit*. The order goes on to provide that the existence of every tree which has

been planted when the order was promulgated be reported to the authorities within 90 days. “Unreported” trees may be uprooted; offenders are liable to one year’s imprisonment.

This is not just another bureaucratic measure to harass the inhabitants or a means by which to reward “good” Arabs and penalize “bad” ones. To obtain a permit, the applicant will have to prove ownership of the land concerned, a burden which, in the faulty state of land registration in the territories, will often be impossible to lift. Blooming orchards may thus eventually turn barren and then, under Jordanian law, become public domain.

Order 1039 has amended order 1015 so that “fruit trees” now include also vegetables.

Needless to say, these orders do not, “of course,” apply to Jews; they do not have to conserve water.

PRISON FOR PEACE CRIMINAL

Israeli soldier Kobi Peter, 25, was sentenced to 28 days in military prison for refusing to serve in occupied Lebanon. The *Jerusalem Post* (October 9-15) reported that Peter was the 100th Israeli soldier to be convicted and imprisoned for this “offense.”

PICNIC PERMIT

Picnics have finally become a threat to Israeli security. A new military edict, issued by the Israeli occupation army in September, decreed that henceforth group travel is a security matter which requires a

prior permit from the military government.

Transport company owners in the occupied West Bank city of Ramallah were summoned to the headquarters of the military government and instructed that group trips on buses, even for social or cultural purposes, are forbidden without prior permission. The rule also requires taxi drivers to inform the military authorities whenever four or more people hire a taxi.

So far, indications are that such a ruling applies only to the city of Ramallah. This means that there is nothing to do with security, and is simply one more scheme for harassing selected populations in the occupied territories.

“QUOTE UNQUOTE”

Israel’s military spending in 1982 reached \$8.24 billion; an increase of \$1.42 billion over 1981. This amounts to \$2,060 for every Israeli, compared with \$1,695 per capita in 1981.

Institute for Strategic Studies (London)

“There is a limit to what the citizens are required to do. Not only is this an unjust war, but our lives are being endangered in a very wasteful manner. I didn’t put my life in Begin’s safe for him to spend as he wishes.”

Andrei Draznin
Israeli soldier who refused to serve in Lebanon
Jerusalem Post
(October 2-8, 1983)

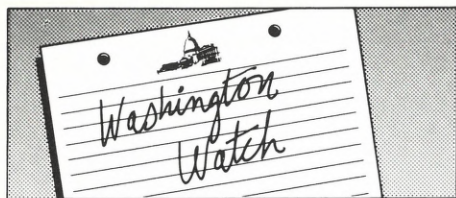
“Israel is a small country, armed to the teeth, strong in national spirit, but sorrowfully lacking in foresight.”

E.H. Hutchinson,
Violent Truce (1956)

“For all their military might and their fantastic propaganda machine, Hitler and colleagues lacked something vital: a proper sense of what the world would stand for. So arrogance drove them to ruin. More than any people on earth, the Israelis ought to heed this lesson of recent history and understand the limits of what this world will tolerate.”

Carl T. Rowan
Chicago Sun Times
(July 2, 1982)





RAMALLAH FEDERATION VOICES CONCERN FOR THREATENED PALESTINIANS

The American Federation of Ramallah, Palestine, the oldest and largest Palestinian Arab American organization, expressed grave concern for the fate of the threatened Palestinian communities in Lebanon and occupied Palestine. In a memorandum submitted to the State Department on October 7, 1983, the Federation urged the United States to intervene on behalf of these endangered communities.

The memorandum was the Federation's response to accumulating evidence of threats to the survival and well-being of the Palestinian people in Lebanon, in Israeli concentration camps, and in occupied Palestine. It quotes a recent classified State Department report which says that "There are serious threats to life and freedom for many Palestinians in Lebanon solely because they are Palestinians." The following is a slightly abbreviated text of the Ramallah Federation's memorandum.

We have perused with keen interest press accounts of a recent State Department Classified Memorandum allegedly drafted by officials in the Bureau of Refugee Programs and Bureau of Near East and South Asian Affairs. If these press accounts are credible, the concerns raised in this Memorandum are analogous to those we have raised in previous meetings with State Department officials.

Specifically, we refer to those aspects of the draft report which state, "There are serious threats to life and freedom for many Palestinians in Lebanon solely because they are Palestinians." Of the 400,000 Palestinians currently in Lebanon, only 100,000 are regarded by the government of President Amin Gemayel as legal residents. "This therefore leaves about 300,000 Palestinians

who are unwanted in Lebanon by that Government."

We further request that the United States government become more actively involved in determining the plight of Palestinian civilian prisoners in the Ansar Detention Camp in southern Lebanon, and in policing the violations of human rights of Palestinians in the refugee camps in southern Lebanon. We specifically refer to the Israeli practice, transplanted from the West Bank, of razing the homes of alleged PLO sympathizers and arresting and detaining the Palestinian population, at the rate of hundreds per day, in an effort to quell Palestinian resistance to Israeli occupation.

COMMENTARY . . . THE ELECTIONS ARE COMING!

It is often said that the presidential election season is a time of paralysis for American foreign policy. This may be true in some areas of U.S. foreign policy, but certainly not in the Middle East. American policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict does not suffer from paralysis but instead becomes gripped with a fit of epilepsy.

This pathetic seasonal phenomenon has already made its appearance in preparation for the coming elections. The various contestants, whether they are guarding their jobs or grabbing for them, have already begun to pay homage to Greater Israel. Although we have become somewhat accustomed to this irresponsible ritual, occasionally we are still shocked by how far some candidates go in sacrificing America's interests and integrity in their chase after votes and campaign money.

Senator John Glenn recently pulled ahead of his fellow candidates in the scramble to impress Israel's domestic agents. To do so, he went beyond the usual limits of expressing support for Israel and displayed appalling insensitivity to the Palestinian people. In a speech to the Foreign Policy Association in New York on September 13, the Senator from Ohio said that "the PLO has proven itself to be little more than a gang of international thugs."

It is significant that the statement was made on the first anniversary of the Sabra and Shatila massacres. And it is unforgivable to brand the victims of the massacres, rather than their perpetrators, "international thugs." There is no way to describe the Senator's performance short of saying that it betrayed bad taste. Secretary of the Interior James Watt had to resign a lesser public trust than Mr. Glenn holds or seeks over less offensive remarks about other people.

Perhaps Senator Glenn found it necessary to use offensive language because he was expressing unsavory ideas. The main thrust of his speech boiled down to an attack on the concept of "evenhandedness" in U.S. Middle East policy. He charged that evenhandedness means a "tilt away from Israel," as if that were a self-evident evil. This is a view held only by the most fanatical Zionists, who have no business competing for the highest office entrusted with the interests and well-being of the American people and the safety of the world.

The United States bases its credentials as a peace maker in the Middle East on the claim that it enjoys the confidence of both sides in the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Arabs have been divided into those who believe and those who do not believe this claim. If Mr. Glenn's views become American policy, there would be no excuse for the Arabs to remain divided on this issue. If the United States cannot, or does not, wish to be evenhanded in the Arab-Israeli conflict, regardless of the reason, then it is an antagonist and not an honest broker, and it must be treated accordingly.

True, the elections are coming, but does irresponsibility have to accompany them? □

We suggest as a fundamental premise that further dispersal of Palestinians would be counterproductive. The most positive approach would involve readmission of displaced Palestinians into occupied Palestine, through some sort of United States subsidized package of aid much like that offered by the Israeli government to Israeli settlers on the West Bank. The tax dollars of United States citizens could just as easily support one project as they do the other.

The fact that the Israelis do not desire the readmission of these Palestinians should pose no great hurdle. The United States could and should create a condition precedent to any

This photograph is dedicated to Senator Glenn... in the hope that he will understand that the Palestinians are not thugs, but the victims of thugs.



Israeli soldier "overpowers" Palestinian school girl in the West Bank.

further Israeli aid package, to the effect that Palestinians must be readmitted into occupied Palestine—particularly into the West Bank.

With respect to the West Bank, the treatment of Palestinians living in occupied Palestine by the Israelis is abominable. The Israeli government seems absolutely determined to make life sufficiently unbearable for Palestinians so as to coerce them to leave their homeland. This hostility is manifested in the following ways:

1. Palestinian landowners are no longer allowed to build upon their land.
2. Palestinian landowners are not allowed to farm their lands or pump water from wells on their property without the explicit approval of the Israeli military authorities. Permission is usually denied.

3. The Israelis continue to raze the homes of suspected PLO sympathizers.
4. The conditions and treatment of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons continues to be unacceptable by international standards.
5. The Israelis routinely deny funding requests for the development of municipalities on the West Bank, and prevent the influx of foreign contributions to West Bank institutions, including health, social welfare, and educational institutions.
6. In addition to deposing all but one elected mayor and dissolving the municipal councils of most West Bank cities, the Israelis have not permitted municipal elections in the West Bank.
7. The Israelis use even minimal provocation to close West Bank

universities, and arbitrarily transfer teachers and students as a form of punishment for political expression.

8. The policy of deportation of Palestinian students, teachers, journalists, as well as any Palestinian who dares to defy Israeli authority continues.
9. Displaced Palestinians are routinely prevented from returning to occupied Palestine, with the result that many families remain disunited.
10. The Israelis continue their censorship of Palestinian newspapers, and have banned the Palestine Press Agency News Service.
11. The myriad of deprivations of the human rights of the Palestinian population continue unabated, including pressure, extortion by armed bands of Israeli settlers, sealing of gates at refugee camps, imposition of curfews for the least provocation, as well as arrests and mistreatment of the population generally. We also wish to especially note the increasing problem of Israeli settler violence against the Palestinian population.

The increasing number of Israeli settlements, and the United States government's apparent acquiescence to the colonization of occupied Palestine by Israeli settlers—in flagrant contravention of U.S.-Israeli agreements and relevant United Nations resolutions—are creating an atmosphere of despair among the Palestinian population.

We firmly condemn this illegal de facto annexation of the West Bank and Gaza by the Israeli government, and call upon our government to use its influence to coerce the Israelis into cessation and dismantling of these settlements.

We additionally ask that the United States Government force the Israelis to cease their deliberate deprivations of the human rights of the Palestinian population.

In conclusion, we reaffirm our position that the Palestine Liberation Organization is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and reiterate our call upon the United States government to recognize and deal with the PLO.

ISRAEL NOT U.S. CHARITY

A coalition of plaintiffs filed a lawsuit in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia challenging the tax-exempt status of leading Zionist organizations in the United States and requesting that U.S. officials enforce the law. The plaintiffs include a member of the Israeli Knesset (parliament), mayors of cities and towns on the West Bank, a Jerusalem rabbi, Palestinian farmers, American professors, and the former Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). Among the groups challenged by the lawsuit are the Jewish National Fund, the United Jewish Appeal, and the American Section of the World Zionist Organization.

At a press conference on October 6, Mark Lane and Linda Huber, lawyers for the plaintiffs, stated that annually up to three-quarters of a billion dollars is sent to Israel,

"improperly claimed as tax-deductible contributions to American Zionist organizations which are not educational or charitable groups but rather are political conduits of a foreign nation." Lane said that the U.S. government has "overlooked the continued violations of federal law which permits tax-exempt status only for religious, charitable or educational groups due to the 'special relationship' between the leaders of Israel and the United States to the detriment of the peoples of both countries."

Huber stated, "The American treasury is being deprived of revenues needed for domestic programs, while the unlawfully claimed tax-deductible contributions are used to support the confiscation of Palestinian land on the West Bank for the building of exclusively Jewish settlements, a policy President Reagan has declared to be an obstacle to peace in the Middle East."

Dr. John H. Davis, former Commissioner-General of UNRWA, said that he is a plaintiff because "the

work which we have done over the past years to provide educational opportunities for young Palestinians on the West Bank and to assist economic development there so that there may be jobs for the Palestinians has been thwarted by the Israeli government. The Israeli government, aided and abetted by tax-deductible contributions from the United States, has embarked upon a cruel program to drive out the Palestinian people from the West Bank and take their land. This can hardly be characterized as educational or charitable work."

Lane, who is Jewish, and Huber recently returned from a trip to the West Bank. Lane said, "We saw the manifestations of a brutal and oppressive occupation. American Jews should know that their 'charitable contributions' are used for oppression, that they have made the region bloom only with barbed wire. This suit and all the facts which accompany it are now matters of record. Let no one now say, 'I didn't know.'"

ISRAEL HARASSES PLAINTIFFS

Some of the plaintiffs in the D.C. District Court case against the tax-exempt status of Zionist organization in the U.S. are being harassed by Israeli authorities. Ibrahim Tawil, the mayor of Bireh (West Bank) was ordered by the Israeli military governor not to attend a press conference the plaintiffs held in Jerusalem with their lawyers on October 16. He was also prohibited from meeting with other plaintiffs.

Other plaintiffs, including the mayors of Nablus, Ramallah, and Anabta, could not attend because they are under "town arrest" and are not permitted to travel. One Israeli plaintiff, Rabbi Moshe Hirsch, was detained for questioning by Israeli police for 24 hours after the press conference.

The American Jewish lawyer Mark Lane commented on this Israeli behavior by saying, "The normal processes of civilized countries do not apply here," and explained that in the U.S. anyone caught interfering with a pending court case is jailed.

THE NEW ETHICS

The Israeli daily *Yediot Ahronot* saluted New York mayor Edward Koch for "daring" to call the United Nations "a sewer." After Menachem Begin won the Nobel Prize for Peace, very little can be surprising.

A MESSAGE TO AMERICANS OF GOOD CONSCIENCE FROM THE WEST BANK MAYORS

We, four duly elected mayors of cities and towns in the West Bank, appeal to you to become familiar with the suffering that is the daily life of our Palestinian people under a harsh and brutal military occupation by the State of Israel for sixteen years.

We know that you are a generous and charitable people. You should know that your gifts of charity have been used by the Israeli authorities to confiscate our land and resources, uproot our olive trees planted hundreds of years ago, divert water from our rich orchards, and make the land that once bloomed a desert for our people. Your support for the State of Israel has contributed to the systematic oppression and denial of basic human rights to our Palestinian people in their own land. Genuine charity does not benefit one people by suppressing another.

We appeal to you to support our case and communicate the issues raised by it in any way you can.

BASSAM SHAKA'A
duly elected Mayor of Nablus

KAREEM KHALAF
duly elected Mayor of Ramallah

IBRAHIM TAWIL
duly elected Mayor of Bireh

WAHID HAMDALLAH
duly elected Mayor of Anabta

REAGAN PLEADS WITH ISRAEL TO INFLUENCE U.S. CONGRESS

A few months ago, a nationally syndicated columnist reported that during one of his visits to Washington, former Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin told President Reagan, "Mr. President, you take care of the State Department and I will handle the Congress." The audacity of this view is so incredible that Israel's control of U.S. policy in the Middle East is generally thought to be highly exaggerated.

But astonishing revelations of the extent of Israel's hold on the Congress of the United States continue to surface. The latest of these revelations emerged in connection with a secret administration plan to create a "Jordanian rapid deployment force" for use in the Gulf states. This plan, which was discussed secretly by a small group of senior administration officials and key congressional committee chairmen, envisioned the creation of a mobile Jordanian force equipped with advanced U.S. weapons to intervene in Gulf countries friendly to the United States in case of internal or external threats to their regimes.

The interesting thing about this scheme is that the president of the United States thinks that he cannot work with Congress unless Israel lets him. Congressional sources to which the information has been leaked told the *Washington Post* (October 14, 1983) that, "President Reagan plans to appeal personally to Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens to intercede with pro-Israeli members of the Congress" to go along with the plan. The president of the United States, in other words, will appeal to a foreign power to manipulate members of the U.S. Congress on behalf of a policy he believes to be in the interest of the United States. It is a scenario that would be unthinkable in any other situation involving executive-legislative relations.

Obviously, the idea of a "special relationship" between Israel and the United States does not mean what most people think it means. It does not simply define U.S. support for Israel, but the abdication of U.S.

(continued on Back Cover)

THE OPINION GAP

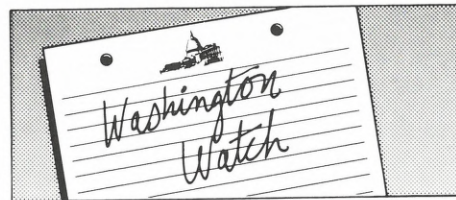
Whenever U.S. public officials are confronted with the unfairness or irrationality of their Middle East policy, they protest that the U.S., being a democracy, cannot help but respond to public opinion. They argue that U.S. policy, whether right or wrong, is a reflection of that opinion.

However, public opinion polls have frequently demonstrated that official U.S. policy in the Middle East is not supported by prevailing American opinion, and in fact often caters to vociferous minorities. For example, during the recent debate on the U.S. military involvement in Lebanon, public opinion conflicted with official policy on the two most important issues involved in the debate: the duration of the assignment of the marines in Lebanon and their role.

Regarding the duration, a Washington Post-ABC poll conducted during the last week of September showed that the American public disagreed with the administration and Congress over their support for a longer commitment of the troops for a period of 18 months. On the other hand, a clear majority of the American people (58 per cent) wanted the troops withdrawn and brought home within six months or less. Only 29 percent favored an 18-month commitment. The policy makers heeded the minority and ignored the majority.

On the issue of the role of the marines in Lebanon, only 30 per cent supported the use of American forces to protect the political regime in Lebanon, and no less than 67 per cent felt that the marines should be either withdrawn or their role should be limited to self-defense. Again, the policy makers ignored the majority and went along with the minority view.

This is not the only case when public opinion polls showed the lack of official Washington sensitivity to American public opinion on the Middle East. A year ago, only a month after President Reagan ruled out political independence and statehood for the Palestinian people, a public opinion poll conducted by DMI for the Institute of Arab Studies revealed that more than 70 per cent



of the American people favored the establishment of a Palestinian state. Obviously, it is not American public opinion which constrains foreign policy makers from pursuing a more evenhanded approach to the conflict in the Middle East.

THE RODMAN PLAN

The State Department and the National Security Council are considering a plan to escalate U.S.-Israeli military collaboration in Lebanon. The plan, reportedly developed by Peter Rodman, a former assistant to Henry Kissinger who is now with the State Department's policy planning council, advocates that the United States and Israel enlarge their presence in Lebanon "to fill a power vacuum" there. According to this plan, the United States would encourage Israel to undertake overflights of Lebanese territories not under its occupation and to recruit collaborators from the Lebanese communities in occupied southern Lebanon, based on the Village Leagues model in the West Bank.

To encourage greater Israeli domination of Lebanon, Secretary of State Shultz recently urged Israel to show more interest in what happens outside the territory it occupies. In other words, it should become more actively involved in the fighting which was then taking place in the Shouf mountains and around Beirut. The United States, the plan promises, would help the Israeli government overcome domestic Israeli opposition to greater Israeli involvement in Lebanon.

Apparently, the United States is beginning to understand how deeply and hopelessly Israel has implicated it in the conflict in Lebanon, and now wishes to reorganize and rationalize the burdens and liabilities of the partnership.



PALESTINE AT THE U.N.

Interview with Zuhdi Terzi

IN SOLIDARITY

On November 29, 1977, the 30th anniversary of the Palestine Partition Resolution, the U.N. General Assembly passed resolution 32/40 which, among other things, designated November 29 of every year as an International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. Following are the relevant parts of that resolution:

The General Assembly,

Recognizing the need for the greatest possible dissemination of information on the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and on the efforts of the United Nations to promote the attainment of those rights,

1. *Requests* the Secretary-General to establish within the Secretariat of the United Nations a Special Unit on Palestinian Rights which would:

(a) Prepare, under the guidance of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, studies and publications relating to:

(i) The inalienable rights of the Palestinian people;

(ii) Relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and other organs of the United Nations;

(iii) The activities of the Committee and other United Nations Organs, in order to promote the attainment of those rights;

(b) Promote maximum publicity for such studies and publications through all appropriate means;

(c) Organize in consultation with the Committee, commencing in 1978, the annual observance of 29 November as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People;

2. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to ensure the full co-operation of the Office of Public Information and other units of the Secretariat in enabling the Special Unit on Palestinian Rights to perform its tasks;

3. *Invites* all Governments and organizations to lend their co-operation to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Special Unit on Palestinian Rights in the implementation of the present resolution.

*91st plenary meeting
2 December 1977*

Palestine Perspectives interviewed Mr. Zuhdi Terzi, the Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization at the United Nations, about expected developments regarding the Palestine question during the current session of the General Assembly. The interview was conducted by Muhammad Hallaj at the UN headquarters in New York on November 4, 1983.

MH: What do you expect from the General Assembly this session?

ZT: The General Assembly will consider the question of Palestine on November 28. I expect it will take the same action and express the same support for Palestinian rights that we have been getting during the last 10 years. The Assembly has already reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to return to their homeland, to self-determination and independent statehood in Palestine, as well as the legitimacy of the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people. In view of what the member states have been saying during the current general debate, we expect that in addition to the reaffirmation of this position, a move would be made to implement the program of action adopted in September 1983 by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine in Geneva. The Conference adopted a political program for the resolution of the Palestine question and the Arab-Israeli conflict which sees the attainment of the national rights of the Palestinian people as the core of the issue and the only way to peace. We expect the adoption of a mechanism to implement such a program, such as the convening of an international peace conference under the auspices of the United Nations in which all interested parties, including the PLO, would be represented. The two super powers, the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., should be represented since their participation is the *sine qua non* of any political settlement. On October 1st, 1977, in the famous Vance-Gromyko joint statement, an agreement between the super powers was reached. Then the U.S. went back on the agreement and has been trying ever since to monopolize political influence over the conflict in the Middle East. We think that cooperation between the super powers is essential, and if the U.S. maintains its current practice of rejecting U.N. participation, and if it continues to insist on imposing its own view, no settlement would be possible, because it is clear that the U.S. government bases its policy on the denial of the Palestinian people's rights to self-determination and independence.

What we will try to do this year is to seek adoption by the General Assembly of the resolutions of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, and to provide for the appropriate mechanism to implement them by convening an international peace conference under the aegis of the U.N.

There are other issues, of course, which will be considered by the General Assembly. For example, UNRWA and its services to Palestinian refugees. It is important that the U.N. continues to carry its responsibilities toward the refugees, not only for humanitarian reasons, which are important enough, but also in recognition of U.N. responsibility in creating the Palestinian tragedy in the first place by passing the partition resolution in 1947 which led to the

expulsion and displacement of the Palestinians, and their subsequent suffering.

Israeli practices in violation of the human rights of the Palestinians under occupation will also come up for discussion. We expect the U.N., as usual, to condemn Israel for its violations of human rights. However, unless the Security Council takes concrete action in the form of sanctions against Israel, it is not likely to heed international opinion. We are not optimistic on the question of imposing sanctions against Israel, for this offense or any other, because of the U.S. veto which has often been used to shelter and protect Israeli aggression.

The question of U.N. assistance to the Palestinian people will also be discussed. Some projects have already been authorized and funds for them allocated. But Israel does not allow the U.N. to undertake any projects of assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied territories which would advance their social and economic development. For example, Israel refuses to permit the establishment of a U.N. university for Palestinian refugees in Jerusalem.

Finally, the Assembly is expected to renew the mandate of the U.N. Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, which is entrusted with keeping under review the work that has been done by the International Conference and will have to assume some role in the convening of the proposed international peace conference. The Assembly will, of course, be commemorating November 29 as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people.

MH: The credentials of the Israeli delegation to the U.N. were challenged this year. On what grounds were they challenged, and will other attempts be made in the future?

ZT: It is the right of anyone to question the credentials of any delegation to the General Assembly. In Israel's case, credentials could be questioned on the grounds of where they were issued, for example. If they were issued in Jerusalem, they could be challenged, because the U.N. does not recognize Israeli sovereignty over Jerusalem. But the challenge to Israel's credentials was made on the grounds that Israel has not respected the Charter of the United Nations or its resolutions, and is not a peace-loving state.

This year, those who moved to question the credentials of the Israeli delegation did so rather late, after the credentials committee had already accepted them. So the issue was decided on technical procedural grounds. I hope next year the challenge will be made in time, and Israel's credentials would be denied as those of South Africa had been.

MH: It has been reported that an attempt will be made to create a seat in the U.N. for a Palestinian state. Is this true?

ZT: There is an idea that the General Assembly should assign a seat for a Palestine Arab State, and that the PLO would occupy that seat in the name of the Palestinian people, in conformity with previously approved U.N. resolutions. The legality of such an act could not be doubted. The Palestinian state was created by the same U.N. resolution which created the state of Israel (resolution 181 of 1947). So, we are not talking about a state which is being advocated, but a state which has already been approved by the U.N. It is only fair that a state founded by the General Assembly should have a seat in it.

Although the legal approach is correct, the matter might raise political ramifications at this point, since all of Palestine is currently under Israeli occupation. In our view,

NEW PUBLICATIONS

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The following new publications are available from the Palestine Research and Educational Center in Washington, D.C. free upon request:

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military occupation does not confer sovereignty, and the occupied territories are protected by the Fourth Geneva Convention. That is why the non-aligned states, in their recent meeting in Delhi on October 31st, affirmed that sovereignty over the occupied territories resides in the Palestinian people themselves. So, occupation in itself does not present a legal barrier to the idea of assigning a seat in the U.N. to the Palestinian state. But it does present political complications. It is a new phenomenon, and the appropriate method to deal with it requires consultations.

Such consultations are being undertaken since the idea was formally presented to the meeting of foreign ministers of the non-aligned movement.

MH: Has the proposal been formally made at the U.N. itself?

ZT: Not formally, not yet.

MH: Do you detect diminishing support for Palestinian rights in the United Nations at this time?

ZT: Definitely not. As a matter of fact, the recent International Conference of the Question of Palestine showed increased understanding and support, and that the time has come to implement Palestinian national rights. The fact that there were 52 states represented at the ministerial level at the conference is in itself an expression of phenomenal support and solidarity. □

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THE DOLLARIZATION OF ISRAEL

Israel called on the overburdened Uncle Sam for one more crutch to shore it up. To avert the total collapse of the Israeli currency, it wants the U.S. dollar to become legal tender in Israel. Israel's economy is so rickety it is practically insolvent. It suffers from a staggering 150 per cent rate of inflation, it has the highest per capita foreign debt in the world, and as a recent IMF report indicated its credit rating slipped below that of Mexico and 64 other countries.

So Israel needs another fig leaf, and that is to be the U.S. dollar. It wants to paste the dollar on its shekel to make it look like money. And why not? After all, it was U.S. diplomatic influence which passed the Palestine partition resolution in the UN in 1947, it is U.S. weapons which Israel uses to fight its wars, it is U.S. money it uses to pay for them, and it is U.S. vetos in the Security Council which give them diplomatic cover. In light of all this, it seems quite reasonable for the Israeli shekel to masquerade behind the U.S. dollar. The only thing that strikes even the casual observer as unreasonable is the claim often heard in Washington that the U.S. is unable to influence the behavior of the sovereign state of Israel.



ISRAEL, RIGHT OR WRONG

Since Menachem Begin and his Likud coalition took over power in Israel in 1977, many analysts said that American Jews have been finding it increasingly difficult to support Israel. The Likud's policy in the occupied West Bank and Gaza, and Israel's invasion of Lebanon were said to have led to the erosion of support for Israel among American Jewry.

A recent survey of American Jews indicates otherwise. The survey, conducted by Dr. Steven Cohen of Brandeis University on behalf of the American Jewish Committee, showed that support for Israel among American Jews is as strong or stronger than ever. The survey's findings suggested that there has been "little or no erosion in the most fervent and passionate support for Israel."

Reagan Pleads

(continued from page 12)

Middle East policy to the state of Israel. This is another point for the Arabs to ponder as they assess America's claim to the role of the disinterested honest broker in the Arab-Israeli conflict; and another point for the American people to ponder as they try to understand why the Arabs are apprehensive about the role of the United States in the Middle East.

[On November 1, the Senate Appropriations Committee voted against the funding of the proposed Jordanian rapid deployment force, thus killing the idea at least for this year. The *Wall Street Journal* (November 2) described this action as "a victory for Israel." The president of the United States lost, again, in his competition with Israel over the leadership of the U.S. Congress.]

RIDDLE

If the West Bank is "Judea and Samaria," what is the dollar?

It is a "Shekdollar."

The survey also showed American Jewish acceptance of the idea that American Jews should deal with candidates for public office on the basis of their positions on Israel. Of those surveyed, 73 per cent agreed that "Jews should not vote for candidates unfriendly to Israel," and about a third of them said that they "contributed money to a political candidate because he/she would support Israel."

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